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Senator John Cauthorn Renews Golden Goose Egg Award

Jefferson City, MO – State Senator John Cauthorn, R-Mexico, today announced he will continue a program he began last year that “awards” state agencies with Golden Goose Eggs for instances of stratospheric taxpayer abuse, dreadful decision making, general mismanagement or any combination thereof.

“This program is a light-hearted approach to bringing serious problems to light,” Cauthorn said. “It has also brought about increased accountability in state government and in the Department of Transportation’s case a policy change, with a complete investigation bringing about a change in procedures regarding travel policies after they received two golden goose egg awards in 2003.”

Cauthorn, chairman of the Senate’s Government Accountability and Fiscal Oversight Committee, formed his program after one used by a former U.S. Senator. From the 1970s through the 1980s, William Proxmire regularly handed out “Golden Fleece” awards to various federal government entities displaying highly questionable managerial acumen.

A taxpayer protection group revived the program on its 25th anniversary in 2000, and NBC’s *Nightly News with Tom Brokaw* regularly airs a similar version of Proxmire’s award in the form of an investigative report, “The Fleecing of America.”

Cauthorn's awardees during last year's session included the governor, for curious accounting of flight time on state-owned planes; the state's public safety department, for hosting a series of lavish community meetings largely without the benefit of attendees; and the office of administration for the agency's incomprehensible green-lighting of a multi-million dollar capitol restroom renovation project during a third straight year of challenging budget conditions.

A few lucky winners even had the luck to win more than once in 2003.

"And many of these past 'winners' are poised to continue their streak in 2004," Cauthorn, who will award eggs throughout the 2004 legislative session, said. "We'll have to take extraordinary good care of the Golden Goose this year to keep up with production demands on those big shiny goose eggs."

Cauthorn encouraged any and all identifiers of state government waste to report their findings to his capitol office. You can contact the office by phone at (573) 751-6858 or by e-mail at john_cauthorn@senate.state.mo.us

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